

REMARKS

I. Introduction

Claims 1-24 and 27-61 are pending in the present application. In a March 13, 2006 Office Action (herein "Office Action"), Claims 1-7, 11, 12, 24, 27, 34-36, 42, and 44-50 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Pub. No. US2002/0082877 A1, to Schiff et al. (herein "Schiff"). Claims 8-10 and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schiff in view of U.S. Patent No. 6868403 B1, to Wiser et al. (herein "Wiser"). Claims 13, 29, and 43 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schiff in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,094,640, to Goheen (herein "Goheen"). Claims 30-33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schiff in view of Goheen as applied to Claim 29, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,953,706, to Patel (herein "Patel"). Claims 14-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schiff in view of Patel and Goheen. Claims 18-23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schiff in view of Patel. Claims 37-41, 51-53, 55-58, 60, and 61 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schiff in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,926,203 B1, to Sehr (herein "Sehr"). Claims 54 and 59 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schiff in view of Sehr, and further in view of Patel.

For the following reasons, applicants respectfully submit that the rejected claims of the present application are allowable over the various combinations of Schiff, Wiser, Goheen, Patel, and Sehr because the cited and applied references, alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest each of the limitations recited with regard to independent Claims 1, 27, 42, and 50. Prior to discussing more detailed reasons why applicants believe that all the claims of the present invention are allowable, a brief description of the present invention and the cited references are presented.

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A. Summary of the Present Invention

The present invention generally relates to a system, method and computer-readable medium for processing reservation requests. Specifically, the present invention maps one or more reservation requests into a three-tiered data structure. In one aspect, the reservation requests are mapped to a reservation transaction record. In another aspect, one or more reservation items records which correspond to a reservation transaction record are generated. In yet another aspect, one or more reservation inventory records which correspond to a reservation items record are generated.

In one example of the present invention, the system includes at least one client computer operable to generate a request for reservation of at least one inventory item. The system further includes a travel server for storing inventory data corresponding to the one or more inventory items. The travel server is further operable to obtain the reservation request from the client computer. Still further, the travel server generates and processes at least one reservation transaction record, one or more reservation items records, and one or more inventory records which correspond to a new reservation request and the inventory data.

Thus, the present invention processes reservation requests for one or more inventory items utilizing the three-tiered reservation request data record.

B. U.S. Publication No. US2002/0082877 A1, to Schiff et al.

Schiff is purportedly directed toward a system and method for reducing large quantities of cruise information to a subset of cruise information. Specifically, Schiff attempts to match a subset of available information in accordance with customer preferences. See Schiff, Para. 32, lines 4-9. The system taught in Schiff includes a user computer with a web browser which communicates with a cruise selling and booking system over a network. *Id.* at Para. 39, lines 1-6. As shown in FIG. 2A of Schiff, the cruise selling and booking system includes a server component, a cruise selling and booking component, and a collection of databases. A

cruise line database is included in the collection of databases. *Id.* at FIG. 2A. The cruise line database may include information about various cruise lines, various cruise ships, and various cruise sailings. *Id.* at Para. 76, lines 1-3. Data in the cruise-line database may be normalized across all cruise lines or may be stored in a manner which accommodates a wide variety of data. *Id.* at Para. 78, lines 1-5.

Schiff teaches that the cruise line database receives a set of customer preferences from a remote user's web browser. *Id.* at Para. 10, lines 6-11. Customer preference data may include: desired occupancy per cabin, acceptable days of the week upon which the cruise may depart, a specific ship, or other data that would help narrow the number of cruise packages presented to a user. *Id.* at Para. 100, lines 7-13; Para. 88, lines 1-6. After the set of customer preferences is received by the cruise line database, the electronic cruise database is searched for a subset of cruise sailings that correspond to the set of customer preferences. *Id.* at Para. 10, lines 11-15. The subset of matching cruises is then returned to the user's web browser. *Id.* at Para. 10, lines 14-15. The subset of cruises returned is not reserved, but merely allows the user to see which cruise packages fit the user's criteria.

Although Schiff is generally directed toward booking cruises (Para. 67, lines 22-27), Schiff fails to teach or suggest the processing of reservation requests in accordance with a three-tiered reservation data structure. Specifically, Schiff fails to teach or suggest that one or more reservation requests may be mapped to a reservation transaction record. Furthermore, Schiff fails to teach one or more reservation inventory records which correspond to a reservation items record. Still further, Schiff fails to teach one or more reservation items records which correspond to a reservation transaction record.

II. Claim Rejections

A. 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) Rejections of the Independent Claims

1. The Claims Distinguished

a. Independent Claims 1 and 50

For purposes of this discussion, Claims 1 and 50 will be discussed together because the limitations discussed herein are similar for each claim. Claim 1, as currently amended, reads as follows:

1. A method for processing reservation requests for one or more inventory items, the method comprising:

obtaining a user request for reservation of at least one inventory item;

obtaining inventory data corresponding to the one or more inventory items and matching the user request for reservation;

generating a three-tiered data structured defined by reservation transaction records, reservation items records, and reservation inventory records corresponding to the matching inventory data,

wherein the reservation transaction records include data associated with one or more reservation requests,

wherein one or more reservation items records correspond to the reservation transaction records and identify a set of inventory items associated with the specific reservation request, and

wherein one or more reservation inventory records correspond to the reservation items records and include data associated with reservation requests for inventory items identified in the reservation items records;

processing the reservation transaction records, reservation items records, and reservation inventory records; and

transmitting results of the processing of the reservation transaction records, reservation items records, and reservation inventory records.

Similarly, Claim 50, as currently amended, reads as follows:

50. A method for processing reservation requests for one or more inventory items, the method comprising:

obtaining a user request for a reservation action corresponding to at least one inventory item;

obtaining a three-tiered data structure defined by pre-existing reservation transaction records, reservation items records, and reservation inventory records corresponding to the inventory item,

wherein the reservation transaction records include data associated with one or more reservation requests,

wherein one or more reservation items records correspond to the reservation transaction records and identify a set of inventory items associated with the specific reservation request, and

wherein one or more reservation inventory records correspond to the reservation items records and include data associated with reservation requests for inventory items identified in the reservation items records;

processing the reservation transaction records, reservation items records, and reservation inventory records according to the reservation action request; and

transmitting results of the processing of the reservation transaction records, reservation items records, and reservation inventory records.

As described above, Claims 1 and 50 recite methods for processing reservation requests for one or more inventory items. Claim 1 specifically recites "obtaining a user request for reservation of at least one inventory item" and "obtaining inventory data corresponding to the one or more inventory items and matching the user request for reservation." Likewise, Claim 50 specifically recites "obtaining a user request for a reservation action corresponding to at least one inventory item." Claim 1 recites the generation of a three-tiered data structure defined by reservation transaction records, reservation items records, and reservation inventory records, while Claim 50 recites obtaining a three-tiered data structure defined by pre-existing reservation transaction records, reservation items records, and reservation inventory records. As recited in the claims, the reservation transaction records include data associated with one or more reservation requests. Each reservation items record corresponds to a reservation transaction record and identifies a set of inventory items associated with the specific reservation request. Furthermore, each reservation inventory record corresponds to a reservation items record and

includes data associated with reservation requests for inventory items identified in the reservation items records.

Claims 1 and 50 further recite "processing the reservation transaction records, reservation items records, and reservation inventory records" and "transmitting results of the processing of the reservation transaction records, reservation items records, and reservation inventory records." Thus, the method recited in Claim 1 processes user requests for reservations by generating reservation transaction records, reservation items records, and reservation inventory records that correspond to inventory data which matches the reservation requests. The method recited in Claim 50 processes user requests for reservations by obtaining the reservation transaction records, reservation items records, and reservation inventory records that correspond to an inventory item. Further, the reservation transaction records, reservation items records, and reservation inventory records recited in Claims 1 and 50 represent a three-tiered data structure that characterizes the reservation requests.

In contrast to the claims of the present application, Schiff is directed toward a system and method for reducing large quantities of cruise information in accordance with customer preferences. See Schiff, Para. 32, lines 4-9; Para. 77, lines 1-3. Schiff teaches that information about various cruise packages is stored in a cruise line database. *Id.* at Para. 76, lines 1-3. Schiff further teaches that the cruise line database may normalize all of the data from various cruise lines or may be configured to accommodate a wide variety of data. *Id.* at Para. 78, lines 1-5. However, Schiff clearly fails to teach generating a three-tiered data structure defined by reservation transaction records, reservation items records, and reservation inventory records corresponding to matching inventory data as recited in Claim 1. Nor does Schiff teach obtaining a three-tiered data structure defined by pre-existing reservation transaction records, reservation items records, and reservation inventory records corresponding to an inventory item as recited in Claim 50. Schiff is silent as to the structure of the reservation data.

Because Schiff fails to teach a three-tiered reservation data structure as recited in the claims, it could not further teach that reservation transaction records include data associated with one or more reservation requests. Accordingly, Schiff further fails to teach one or more reservation items records which correspond to the reservation transaction records. Still further, Schiff fails to teach one or more reservation inventory records which correspond to reservation items records. Schiff merely teaches that cruise line data may be normalized or configured to accommodate a wide variety of data. *Id.* at Para. 78, lines 1-5.

Furthermore, Para. 10 of Schiff, which the Office Action relied on to reject Claims 1 and 50, teaches matching a set of customer preferences with a subset of cruise sailings in an electronic cruise database and returning the subset to a remote user's web browser. Specifically, Para. 10, lines 11-15, of Schiff states:

The method [] comprises searching the electronic cruise sailing database for a subset of the cruise sailings that correspond to the set of customer preferences and returning the subset of the cruise sailings to the remote user's web browser for display as an electronic document.

(Emphasis added). Clearly, Para. 10 does not teach a method for processing reservation requests as recited in Claims 1 and 50, but instead teaches a method for narrowing down the selection of available cruises in a cruise line database to a more manageable subset of cruises.

To anticipate a claim under § 102(e), the cited reference must teach each and every element recited in the claim. *Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California*, 814 F.2d 628, 631 (Fed. Cir. 1987). With regard to Claims 1 and 50, applicants respectfully submit that the cited reference, Schiff, fails to teach at least "generating a three-tiered data structured defined by reservation transaction records, reservation items records, and reservation inventory records corresponding to the matching inventory data" as recited in Claim 1 and "obtaining a three-tiered data structure defined by pre-existing reservation transaction records, reservation items records, and reservation inventory records corresponding to the inventory item" as recited in Claim 50.

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For these reasons, applicants respectfully request a withdrawal of the § 102(e) rejection with regard to Claims 1 and 50.

b. Independent Claim 27

Claim 27 reads as follows:

27. A system for processing reservation of one or more inventory items, the system comprising:

at least one client computer operable to generate a request for reservation of at least one inventory item; and

a travel server for storing inventory data corresponding to the one or more inventory items, the travel server operable to obtain the reservation request from the client computer;

wherein the travel server generates and processes at least one reservation transaction record, one or more reservation items records, and one or more reservation inventory records corresponding to a new reservation request and the inventory data.

As described above, Claim 27 recites a system for processing reservation of one or more inventory items. The system includes at least one client computer operable to generate a request for reservation of at least one inventory item. A travel server for storing inventory data corresponding to the one or more inventory items is also included in the system. The travel server is operable to obtain the reservation request from the client computer. Claim 27 further recites that the travel server generates and processes at least one reservation transaction record, one or more reservation items records, and one or more reservation inventory records corresponding to a new reservation request and the inventory data. Thus, Claim 27 recites a system for processing reservations wherein a travel server generates and processes reservation transaction records, reservation items records, and reservation inventory records which correspond to new reservation requests obtained from a client computer and inventory data stored on the travel server.

As described above, Schiff teaches a cruise line database which receives a set of customer preferences from a remote user's web browser. See Schiff, Para. 10, lines 6-11. After the set of customer preferences is received by the cruise line database, the database is searched for a subset of cruise sailings that correspond to the set of customer preferences. *Id.* at Para. 10, lines 11-15. The subset of matching cruises is then returned to the user's web browser. *Id.* at Para. 10, lines 14-15. The subset of cruises returned is not reserved, but merely allows the user to see which cruise packages fit the user's criteria. Clearly, Schiff does not teach a travel server that generates and processes reservation transaction records, reservation items records, and reservation inventory records which correspond to new reservation requests obtained from a client computer and inventory data stored on the travel server.

The Office Action cited Schiff, Para. 42, lines 3-11, and Para. 16 as teaching Claim 27's limitation of "at least one client computer operable to generate a request for reservation of at least one inventory item." See Office Action, p. 8. Although Para. 42, lines 3-11 of Schiff does describe a client computer which "may connect to [a] cruise selling and booking system[.]" the cited portion of Schiff does not teach or suggest a client computer "operable to generate a request for reservation of at least one inventory item" as recited in Claim 27. Para. 16, lines 7-12, of Schiff describes:

[A] system comprise[d of] a user preference programming module configured to send a set of user preferences to the remote cruise web server system and a display programming module configured to receive a display of cruise package and pricing information corresponding to the set of user preferences.

(Emphasis added). Clearly, Para. 16 of Schiff does not teach at least one client computer operable to generate a request for reservation of at least one inventory item as recited in Claim 27, but instead teaches a system for matching a set of user preferences to a set of cruise packages.

With regard to Claim 27, applicants respectfully submit that the cited reference, Schiff, fails to teach at least a travel server that "generates and processes at least one reservation transaction record, one or more reservation items records, and one or more reservation inventory records corresponding to a new reservation request and the inventory data" as recited in Claim 27. For these reasons, applicants respectfully request a withdrawal of the § 102(e) rejection with regard to Claim 27.

c. Independent Claim 42

Claim 42 reads as follows:

42. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable components for processing reservation of one or more inventory items, comprising:

a reservation transaction component operable to identify one or more reservation requests for inventory items;

one or more reservation items components corresponding to the reservation transaction record and operable to identify reservation requests for inventory items; and

one or more reservation inventory components associated with the reservation items component and operable to define a reservation request for an individual inventory item.

As described above, Claim 42 recites a computer-readable medium having computer-executable components for processing reservation of one or more inventory items. Claim 42 specifically recites a "reservation transaction component operable to identify one or more reservation requests for inventory items." The computer-readable medium of Claim 42 further includes "one or more reservation items components corresponding to the reservation transaction record and operable to identify reservation requests for inventory items." Still further, Claim 42 recites "one or more reservation inventory components associated with the reservation items component and operable to define a reservation request for an individual inventory item." Thus, Claim 42 recites a computer-readable medium for processing reservation

of one or more inventory items including a reservation transaction component, one or more reservation items components, and one or more reservation inventory components.

The Office Action cites Schiff, Para. 10 as anticipating Claim 42. As described above, Para. 10 of Schiff teaches a cruise line database which receives a set of customer preferences from a remote user's web browser. See Schiff, Para. 10, lines 6-11. After the set of customer preferences is received by the cruise line database, the database is searched for a subset of cruise sailings that correspond to the set of customer preferences. *Id.* at Para. 10, lines 11-15. The subset of matching cruises is then returned to the user's web browser. *Id.* at Para. 10, lines 14-15. Furthermore, the subset of cruises returned is not reserved, but merely allows the user to see which cruise packages fit the user's criteria. Thus, Para. 10 of Schiff teaches a method for matching a set of customer preferences with a subset of cruise sailings in an electronic cruise sailing database. Clearly, Schiff does not teach a computer-readable medium for processing reservation of one or more inventory items including a reservation transaction component, one or more reservation items components, and one or more reservation inventory components, as recited in Claim 42.

With regard to Claim 42, applicants respectfully submit that the cited reference, Schiff, fails to teach a computer-readable medium for processing reservation of one or more inventory items including a reservation transaction component, one or more reservation items components, and one or more reservation inventory components. For these reasons, applicants respectfully request a withdrawal of the § 102(e) rejection with regard to Claim 42.

B. 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) and 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Rejections of the Dependent Claims

1. Dependent Claims 2-24

Claims 2-24 are dependent on Claim 1. As discussed above, Schiff fails to teach or suggest all of the limitations recited with regard to Claim 1. Accordingly, for at least the reasons mentioned above in regards to Claim 1, dependent Claims 2-24 are allowable over the cited and

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applied references, alone or in combination. In addition, Claims 2-24 further add to the patentability and nonobviousness of applicants' invention. For these reasons, applicants respectfully request a withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) and 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejections of Claims 2-24.

2. Dependent Claims 28-41

Claims 28-41 are dependent on Claim 27. As discussed above, Schiff fails to teach or suggest all of the limitations recited with regard to Claim 27. Accordingly, for at least the reasons mentioned above in regards to Claim 27, dependent Claims 28-41 are allowable over the cited and applied references, alone or in combination. In addition, Claims 28-41 further add to the patentability and nonobviousness of applicants' invention. For these reasons, applicants respectfully request a withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) and 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejections of Claims 28-41.

3. Dependent Claims 43-49

Claims 43-49 are dependent on Claim 42. As discussed above, Schiff fails to teach or suggest all of the limitations recited with regard to Claim 42. Accordingly, for at least the reasons mentioned above in regards to Claim 42, dependent Claims 43-49 are allowable over the cited and applied references, alone or in combination. In addition, Claims 43-49 further add to the patentability and nonobviousness of applicants' invention. For these reasons, applicants respectfully request a withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) and 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejections of Claims 43-49.

4. Dependent Claims 51-61

Claims 51-61 are dependent on Claim 50. As discussed above, Schiff fails to teach or suggest all of the limitations recited with regard to Claim 50. Accordingly, for at least the reasons mentioned above in regards to Claim 50, dependent Claims 51-61 are allowable over the cited and applied references, alone or in combination. In addition, Claims 51-61 further add to

the nonobviousness of applicants' invention. For these reasons, applicants respectfully request a withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejections of Claims 51-61.

IV. Conclusion

Based on the above-referenced arguments, applicants respectfully submit that all of the pending claims of the present application, Claims 1-24 and 27-61, are allowable over the cited and applied references. Accordingly, applicants respectfully request withdrawal of all the rejections of the claims of the present invention and allowance of the present application. If any questions remain, applicants request that the Examiner contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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